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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 041240Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4636
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0295
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 1358
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 7024
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 1430

UNCLAS ROME 001322

SIPDIS

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BRUSSELS FOR PATRICIA LERNER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IT](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY'S INTERIM RESPONSE: NO IMMEDIATE FUNDS FOR
2009 ELECTION COSTS IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: A. SECSTATE 57541

[1](#)B. ROME 71

[1](#)C. ROME 28

[1](#)D. ROME 27

[1](#)1. This is an action request. Please see para 4.

[1](#)2. EconOff delivered reftel demarche April 14 to Maria Pia Dradi, Afghanistan Desk Officer for MFA's Office of Development Cooperation (ODC); and PolOff delivered reftel demarche April 18 to Anna Della Croce, MFA's Coordinator for Afghanistan. In a follow-up meeting April 20, Dradi informed EconOff that Della Croce and Alessandro Modiano, ODC's Office Director for Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, had discussed the election budget shortfall, and that Modiano would have further discussions with Guiseppe Deodato, ODC's Director General, on this issue. Dradi noted Italy provided the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) a total of 15 million euros to date for Afghan election support. She thanked EconOff for bringing ODC's attention to the existing budget shortfall, as Italy had previously been unaware that the commission lacked the necessary funds to prepare for the 2009 elections.

[1](#)3. EconOff spoke again May 2 with Dradi, who said no decision had been reached. Dradi promised she would inform EconOff immediately, once a decision is made. COMMENT: The delay could be a result of Italy's recent elections and the current flurry of activity to form a new government. Italy's final response will be conditioned by recent severe cuts in the GOI foreign assistance budget (Reftels B, C, D). END COMMENT.

[1](#)4. ACTION REQUEST: Italy is contending with a 27 percent decrease in its 2006 foreign assistance budget. Our interlocutors wonder why we are requesting information on funding so soon before the 2009 elections. Please provide that background and the deadline by which international donors must make a decision on funding to ensure Afghanistan's administration of the 2009 election is not hampered by insufficient funds. End action request.
SPOGLI